



10 September 2005



SAFETY ALERT **Yet Another Motorcycle Fatality**

1. Last Wednesday we lost yet another USAREUR Soldier in a motorcycle crash. While riding home in the evening after work, the Soldier lost control of his motorcycle on an open stretch of highway, went off the road, and suffered fatal injuries. Although this accident is still under investigation, we know that the Soldier was not wearing all the required personal protective equipment and clothing (PPEC). In addition, the Soldier—who had limited motorcycle experience—had recently moved up from a moderately powered bike to a very powerful, 900cc machine.

2. To say I am saddened at the loss of another great Soldier is an enormous understatement. This is the seventh time I have issued a Bell Sends safety alert as the result of a motorcycle fatality. Each message addressed safe motorcycle operating procedures, training requirements, and specific safety initiatives to prevent these accidents. In spite of the command emphasis on this issue, we continue to lose high-quality Soldiers to motorcycle crashes. Let me put this serious problem in perspective:

- **Army-Wide Losses.** The Army has lost 34 Soldiers to motorcycle accidents this fiscal year alone. This number is roughly double the average loss for the previous 15 years and reflects numbers not seen in almost 20 years. In other words, we are failing to learn from our past mistakes. Bringing this closer to home, we have lost three Soldiers and one family member to motorcycle crashes this year in the Army in Europe.

- **Accident Causes.** Most accidents and associated injuries fall into the categories shown below. While we do not know all the circumstances surrounding this latest accident, it is likely that one or more of these factors were involved:

- Speeding or riding too fast for conditions.
- Riding while under the influence of alcohol.
- Failing to wear required PPEC.
- Limited riding skills.
- Limited experience with unfamiliar equipment.



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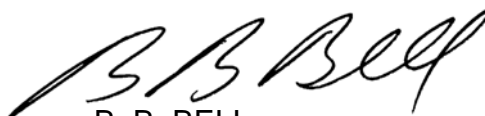
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● **Requirements.** The following requirements have been emphasized in several Army in Europe safety campaigns, but are well worth repeating. To ride a motorcycle in the Army in Europe, Soldiers must—

- Be properly licensed to operate a motorcycle.
- Have completed Motorcycle Safety Foundation training.
- Abide by PPEC requirements as specified in the USAREUR 2005 Summer Safety Campaign (encl 3, tab N) at all times, both on and off duty.
- Comply with posted speeds limits.

3. Although leaders cannot be expected to provide direct supervision 24 hours a day, they can certainly influence the behavior of Soldiers under their command, both on and off duty. If a leader at any level is aware that someone is not complying with safety standards, the leader must take corrective action before an accident occurs. Enforcing standards is a leadership responsibility and a way of demonstrating our concern for Soldiers and their families.

4. When a Soldier dies in a tragic accident, we lose a comrade and a family member, and the Army loses experience and skills that take years to develop and cannot simply be replaced at the recruiting office. I ask that you all get involved in helping our Army team protect its own and helping stop these needless life-ending tragedies. By enforcing standards and watching out for each other, we can continue to execute with excellence Any Mission, Anywhere.



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General, US Army
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ANY MISSION, ANYWHERE!